

“Clare Turner's” Frozen Cranberry Salad

Ingredients:

1 (8 oz.) package fat free cream cheese
1 cup of sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 (20 oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained
1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip
1 cup chopped pecans or English walnuts
1 can of "whole berry" cranberry sauce

Directions:

In mixer, mix cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add lemon juice and pineapple. Stir in Cool Whip and nuts. Add cranberry sauce. Stir until pink and well blended. Pour into an 8 X 8 container and freeze. This will keep in the freezer covered for at least two months. Enjoy!

PERSONAL Note: This recipe is from a dear friend on mine, Clare Turner. She is a wonderful southern lady who knows how to cook. She keeps this recipe made up and on hand in her freezer just in case she needs to take something to friends and family. Now that's a southern thing!

Apple Blue Cheese Spread with Pecans

8 oz. cream cheese
½ cup sour cream
2 cup finely chopped apple (leave peeling on)
¼ cup crumbled blue cheese
¼ cup chopped red onion
¼ cup chopped pecan

Beat cream cheese spread and sour cream in medium bowl until well blended. Add apples, blue cheese, onions and pecans; mix well. Cover. Refrigerate at least 2 hours. Serve with Wheat thins or your favorite cracker.

PERSONAL Note: This recipe was created by Toni Gaskill of Greenville, NC and just won first place at the 2007 NC State Fair in the North Carolina Apple Recipe Contest. I used the North Carolina Fuji apple because of its sweet crisp flavor and the color was beautiful in the spread. This is a delicious and unique appetizer that my family loved!

Broccoli Casserole

2 heads fresh broccoli, chopped
2 cans cream of broccoli soup
2/3-cup mayonnaise
½ teaspoon lemon juice
2/3 cup grated cheddar cheese
¾ cup breadcrumbs

Steam the broccoli in 6 Tablespoons of water for 5 minutes in the microwave. Drain the broccoli and place it in a 9 X 13 casserole dish. Mix the soup, mayonnaise and lemon juice together and spread over the broccoli. Sprinkle the cheese and breadcrumbs over the soup mixture. Bake at 350 for 35 minutes.

PERSONAL Note: This is a family favorite at my grandmother's for Thanksgiving. Who doesn't love a casserole? To change the recipe up a little, you can add 6 chicken thighs, cooked and chopped and use cream of chicken soup to turn it into a main dish.

Pecan Pumpkin Crisp

1-cup evaporated milk
1-cup sugar
15 ounce can pumpkin
1-teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 package butter-flavored, yellow cake mix (18.25 ounce)
1 cup chopped pecans
1 cup melted butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Stir together the first five ingredients. Pour into a lightly greased 13-inch by 9-inch baking dish. Sprinkle cake mix evenly over butter mixture. Evenly sprinkle pecans over cake mix. Drizzle butter evenly over pecans. Bake for 1 hour or until golden brown. Cover with aluminum foil after 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let stand 10 minutes before serving.

PERSONAL Note: This recipe won third place in the North Carolina Pecan Recipe Competition at the NC State Fair this year. Julie DePiro created this delicious dessert. This recipe is very easy and great for Thanksgiving.

Turkey Shepherd's Pie

4 tablespoon unsalted butter
4 teaspoons olive oil
1 cup chopped yellow onions
2 carrots, peeled and chopped (about 1 cup)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 garlic clove, minced
4 ounces mushrooms, stemmed, wiped clean, and diced
1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 bay leaf
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 Turkey Cutlets, diced in bite size pieces
1 1/4 cups canned chicken broth
1 cup frozen green peas
4 cups Mashed Potatoes, recipe follows
1 cup grated cheese, Monterey Jack and Colby Blend
Whole Cranberry Sauce, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly grease 4 oven-safe individual serving dishes or a 9-inch square baking dish with the butter and set aside.

In a large sauté pan or skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Season your turkey with salt and pepper. Cook until turkey is cooked through, 10-15 minutes. Remove the turkey. To sauté pan, add the onions, carrots, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring, until the onions are soft, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 20 seconds. Add the butter, mushrooms, thyme, and bay leaf and cook, stirring, until the mushrooms are soft, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the flour and cook, stirring, until thick, about 1 minute. Return the meat and stir well to combine. Gradually add the stock and then the peas, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the mixture is thickened, 6 to 8 minutes.

Remove from the heat and discard the bay leaf. Carefully transfer to the prepared dish and spoon the potatoes over the meat mixture, spreading to the edges. Sprinkle with the cheese and bake until the cheese is bubbly and the potatoes are crisp around the edges, 22 to 25 minutes.

Let the Shepherd's Pie sit for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with chopped cranberry sauce and serve.

Mashed Potatoes:

5 medium baking potatoes, peeled, quartered, cut into 1-inch wedges

1/2-teaspoon salt

1/2 tsp. black pepper

12 tablespoons unsalted butter (1 1/2 sticks)

1/2 cup half and half

Place the potatoes in a medium, heavy saucepan with enough salted water to cover by 1-inch. Bring to the boil; reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer until the potatoes are fork tender, about 20 minutes.

Drain in a colander and return to the saucepan. Over medium-low heat, cook the potatoes for 1 minute to dry. Add the butter, half and half, salt and pepper and mash until smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Serve immediately.

Serves: 4 to 6 people

PERSONAL Note: This is a great recipe for Thanksgiving because if you are having a small gathering it is Thanksgiving in one bowl. Not so many dishes to fix and clean up. This is also a great recipe for your leftovers. Simply shred your leftover turkey and use your leftover vegetables to create another delicious meal.